

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-12

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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:JEBRIGGS
APPROVED BY NEA/P:JEBRIGGS
S/PRS - MR. KING (INFO)
H - MISS FOLGER
NEA/GRK:MR. CHURCHILL

----- 129388

R 282045Z MAR 74
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

UNCLAS STATE 062478

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR
SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING IS PARTIAL
EXCERPT FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING MARCH 28,
1974:

QUOTE: Q. ARE THERE DIFFICULTIES WITH THE HOMEPORING
NEGOTIATIONS WITH GREECE ?

A. DIFFICULTIES, I WOULDN'T USE THAT WORD MYSELF, BUT I CAN
TELL YOU THAT THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT RECENTLY DECIDED TO
POSTPONE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PHASE 2 OF THE HOMEPORING
PROGRAM.

Q. SAY THAT AGAIN. INDEFINITELY POSTPONED?

A. RECENTLY DECIDED TO POSTPONE.

Q. WHAT PHASE?

A. PHASE 2 -- THE SHORTHAND THAT IS USED HERE -- PHASE 2
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OF THE HOMEPORING PROGRAM, WHICH INVOLVED AN AIRCRAFT

CARRIER AND A MEDICAL SHIP. POSTPONEMENT HAS RESULTED FROM DELAYS IN MAKING VARIOUS TECHNICAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEPENDENTS AND FOR THE AIRCRAFT THAT WOULD BE ASSIGNED TO THE

CARRIER.

Q. HOW DID THE DELAYS COME ABOUT? I MEAN WHAT DELAYED IT?

A. TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS.

Q. BETWEEN THE GREEKS AND THE AMERICANS? I MEAN THESE DELAYS HAVE COME UP IN THE COURSE OF NEGOTIATIONS?

A. NO. I SAY TECHNICAL PROBLEMS. AND REALLY FOR DETAILS ON WHAT THEY ARE YOU SHOULD GO TO THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT.

Q. AS I UNDERSTAND IT, THE STATE DEPARTMENT NEARLY A YEAR AGO WAS TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO GIVE FINAL APPROVAL TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PHASE 2; THAT IS, THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE CARRIER AND THE MEDICAL SHIP. WAS THAT APPROVAL EVER GIVEN?

A. YES.

Q. WHEN?

A. SOME WHILE BACK.

Q. YOU SAID THAT THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT RECENTLY DECIDED TO POSTPONE PHASE 2, AND THAT, AS A RESULT, THERE HAS BEEN A DELAY IN TECHNICAL ARRANGEMENTS.

A. NO.

Q. IS THAT WRONG?

A. YES. THE POSTPONEMENT HAS RESULTED FROM DELAYS IN MAKING VARIOUS TECHNICAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEPENDENTS AND FOR THE AIRCRAFT BEING ASSIGNED TO THE CARRIER.

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Q. MY UNDERSTANDING IS THAT THE PHASE 2 WAS ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED, OR EARLIER SCHEDULED, TO TAKE EFFECT IN JUNE OR JULY OF THIS YEAR. TO WHEN IS IT BEING POSTPONED?

A. I DON'T KNOW, BUT IT WOULD SEEM TO ME THE APPROPRIATE PEOPLE TO ANSWER THAT WOULD BE DEFENSE. END QUOTE.

IN CALLS FROM PRESS FOLLOWING BRIEFING, DEPARTMENT MADE

CLEAR THAT ITS APPROVAL FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PHASE II OF
HOMEPORTING WAS APPROVAL IN PRINCIPLE. RUSH

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